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ABSTRACT

The Morrill Land Grant Act (1862) granted public land to the states to establish agricultural and mechanical colleges. The land grant concept of bringing the services of the colleges to the farmers and mechanics was implemented by the Hatch Act (1887). Other important acts were the Second Morrill Act (1890), which gave monetary supplements to established land-grant colleges, and the Smith-Lever Act (1914), which provided for a program of cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics. From 1914 to 1917 the economic and political conditions of the United States changed drastically. Craftsmen and leaders saw the necessity of promoting industrial education to meet societal demands caused by these conditions. The Douglas Commission (1906) was appointed to seek information concerning what was being done in Massachusetts public schools for manual training. Its report was responsible for legislation incorporating vocational education into the public school system. Another prime mover of vocational education into the public secondary school was the National Society for the Promotion of Vocational Education (1906). One effect resulting from the success of the leaders of the National Society was the development of a movement for more Federal aid for vocational programs--the Federal Commission on National Aid to Vocational Education (1914). (YLB)

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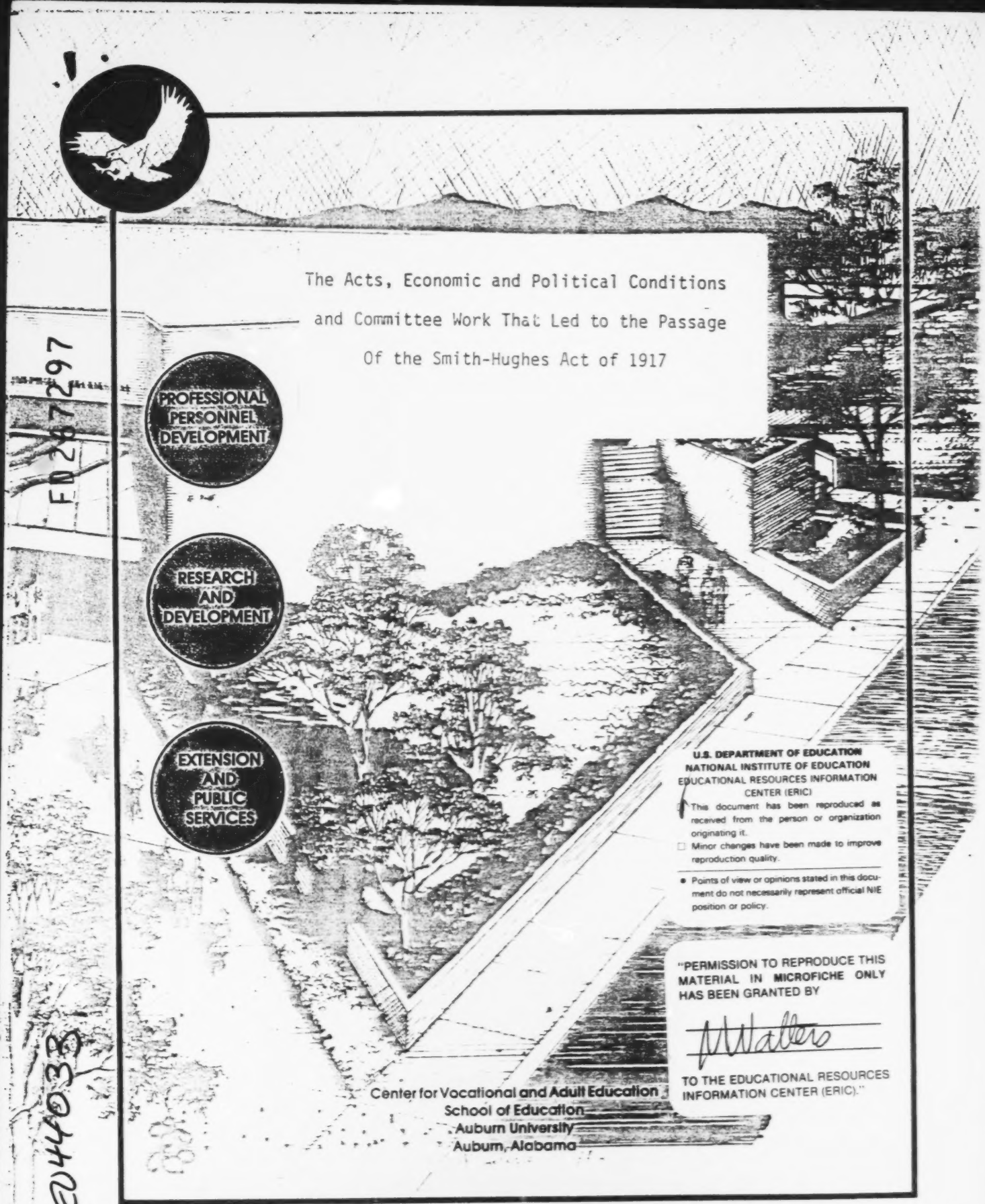

The Acts, Economic and Political Conditions and Committee Work That Led to the Passage Of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917

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The Acts, Economic and Political Conditions and Committee Work That Led to the Passage of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917

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The Acts, Economic and Political Conditions and Committee Work That Led to the Passage of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917

Introduction

Vocational education made very early beginnings among the races of mankind. In all man's effort to conquer the physical environment, the dangers and rigors of the external world, manual skill and knowledge pertinent to specific tasks have in one way or another been transmitted from generation to generation.

Vocational education in the United States, however, was approached gradually and indirectly and became the concern of many educators and legislators in the 1800s. At this time, the popular demand was growing for schools to take over the function of vocational training, which before had been almost entirely an apprenticeship system. The Latin schools were usually conducted by masters, whose scholarship had been confined to classics and this intensified demand for practical vocational training (Butts & Cremin, 1953).

The Land-Grant and other acts helped to stimulate the vocational school for higher education and led to the passage of the first vocational act, the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. These acts are discussed in the following section.

The Acts That Led to the Passage of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917

Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862

The First Morrill Act was signed on July 2, 1862, by President Lincoln, granting public land to the states for the purpose of establishing agricultural and mechanical colleges. The Act created the "land-grant" colleges which exist in most states today (Wenrich & Wenrich, 1974). The sponsor of the Act was Senator Justin S. Morrill of Vermont. He was a farmer, did not have a college education, did not know about the problems of educational administration, but wanted educational opportunities for young men who were not in the professional field which he considered literary colleges. His concern was that American farmers were not as up to date in scientific farming as those in Europe, and there was a need for organized training of agricultural and mechanical workers to meet the needs of a growing nation (McCarthy, 1952). The bill did not include an educational plan but the states were permitted to use 10% of the funds received from the sale of public lands to be used for equipment and buildings.

The Act provided for:

1. 30,000 acres of land for each college;
2. new colleges or designation of existing ones;
3. control by state or local agencies;

4. federal funding grants or;
5. U.S. Revenue Loans;
6. surplus money to schools for safekeeping;
7. vocational education acceptance to higher education;
8. select few as elite as other institutions;
9. state accountability for loss of funds;
10. state accountability for sale of land;
11. federal involvement through regulations; and
12. set precedence for federal legislation and funding.

Hatch Act of 1887

In March of 1887 the Hatch Act was passed and called for establishment of regional agricultural experiment stations in each state which had a land grant college (Butts, 1953) so the farmers and mechanics to be served would not have to move away to attend the land-grant colleges. Most farmers and mechanics could not afford to leave for four years even if they received free tuition. Initially, they also placed more value on improving their farming skills than on the services rendered by the graduates of the agricultural colleges.

The Hatch Act implemented the land grant concept of bringing the services of the colleges to the farmers when the farmers were unable to go to the colleges. The acceptance of this was gradual. The impact of the act placed emphasis on taking the knowledge to the people, set a precedence for increased funding each year, and

provided for demonstration and testing at the experimental stations.

Second Morrill Act of 1890

The Second Morrill Act signed on March 30, 1890, by President Benjamin Harrison gave monetary supplements to the already established land-grant colleges under the Morrill Act of 1862 (Butts, 1953). This Act made cash appropriations of $15,000 a year to the black A & M Colleges in each state with an automatic increase of $1,000 a year to each state until the appropriation reached $25,000 per year (McCarthy, 1952). The impact of the act provided money supplements and increasing funds, established black A & M (land grant) colleges, and established provisions for teacher training.

Smith-Lever Act of 1914

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 provided federal funds for the state agricultural colleges for instructional and advisory programs for farmers (Butts & Cremin, 1953). It provided for a program of cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics. The extension service was an adjunct of the experiment stations and the activities were to include technical, scientific and business methods, sanitation practices, economic, social, and moral subjects for youth and adults in towns, cities, and the country.

The act set a precedence for:

1. cooperative extension work in Agriculture and Home Economics;

2. laboratory schools;

3. federal funds to State Agricultural Colleges for advisory programs and instruction; and

4. requirements for matching funds and for the St. Marine School Act.

The Economic and Political Conditions and Committee Work in the United States During the Period 1914-17

The economic and political conditions of the United States during the period of 1914-17 changed drastically. At this time the craftsmen and the leaders saw the necessity of promoting industrial education to meet society demands these economic and political conditions were causing. The results of the land grant college programs and efforts were still inadequate and the experiment stations were not yet reaching enough workers on the farms or in industries. The politicians had confused ideas about Federal and states' rights. Some wanted to preserve Federal constitutional rights for education and others wanted education handled by states and local communities. Most had limited vision of the educational problems both locally and nationally and a rapidly growing nation was causing economic and political problems. There were those who did not understand the state and local involvements and were primarily conscious of the demands on

the federal treasury and wanted federal control of all education. Regardless of these varied problems and situations, there were several bills passed without sufficient evidence of specific educational needs or of any plan for the use of federal aid which would help solve the problems of the farmer and the mechanic (McCarthy, 1952).

The congressional members had begun to feel the effects at state and local levels. The Douglas Commission report and other groups were talking about the interest of employers in trying to meet the needs of the industrial development. They had also gradually become aware and better informed about the needs in education while working for and/or against the Morrill and other Acts. Most education emphasized the academics and failed to recognize that the skilled worker and economic needs of the nation were not being served by the public schools. During this time free public schools were in the developmental stage and the governance and funding problems were utilizing their time. The skills needed for preparation for work were not included in many of these new educational developments because they had not yet recognized that general education was not enough to meet the need for vocational education and training. This was during a time when apprenticeship training was declining.

Even though the original purpose of the American high schools, as stated in the report of the Boston Committee in 1820,

was to prepare youth for occupational life, the public schools continued to be interested chiefly in furthering college preparatory education (Struck, 1930). In addition, during the early 1900s the educational institutions were not serving enough of the population; land grant colleges were considered to be doing only secondary level work, and there was also a continuing need for vocational education in more fields and skills. These realities reflect back to the appointment of members to serve on the Douglas Commission. Their purpose was to find out what was being done in the public schools for manual training.

The Douglas Commission (1906)

On May 24, 1905, Governor William L. Douglas of Massachusetts appointed a commission of people with industrial and technical experiences to investigate the needs for education in the different levels and kinds of skill and responsibility needed in the various industries of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These members represented labor and agriculture as well as businessmen. They were given broad powers and were seeking factual information concerning what was being accomplished in the public schools in the programs providing for manual training.

The report from the Commission stated that:

1. manual training was inadequate;
2. there was evidence of a lack of skilled labor;
3. public education was too narrow;

4. schools in general were inadequate;

5. labor unions were suspicious of the graduates;

6. expenses should be wholly or in part paid by the state;

7. programs should be developed to better the needs of the state; and the

8. state has its own rights and responsibilities in funding.

The Commission recomended that:

1. the elementary schools in the cities should be modified to include instruction in the practice of elements of production industry to include agriculture, mechanical skills, mathematics, and science;

2. all towns and cities should provide elective industrial courses in high schools and include agriculture, mechanical, and scientific content;

3. interest in economic and social aspects of education should be incorporated as well as training for jobs;

4. industries could thrive without child labor and could thrive better with educated labor;

5. day and evening courses in the trades should be offered parttime for ages 14 through 18; and

6. action be taken to present proposals to the legislature to establish independent public schools.

The impact of the report from the Commission resulted in:

1. incorporation of vocational education into the public schools in Massachusetts;

2. free industrial education;

3. increased productivity of food and fiber for people to improve their living;

4. emphasis on preparation and preservation of food in Home Economics;

5. ways to analyze costs and benefits of education; and

6. the first documentation and recording of educational needs (New York, 1909; Wisconsin, 1911; Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Virginia, 1930).

In summary, the Douglas Commission report was responsible for legislation incorporating vocational education in the public school system of Massachusetts in 1906. This was perhaps due to a great extent to the demand to develop programs to fit the needs of the state. Since the state was providing all funds and facilities, there was no fear of federal intervention and domination (McCarthy, 1952).

Another organization that was a prime mover of vocational education in the public secondary school was the National Society for the Promotion of Vocational Education in 1906. This Society was a vital link in moving vocational education into the educational system.

The National Society for the Promotion of Vocational Education (1906)

The National Society for the Promotion of Vocational Education was started in New York City, but it soon extended its influences into neighboring industrial states in the New England and North Atlantic areas. The two main purposes of the Society were (a) to call to the attention of the nation the need for industrial education (which was later to be expanded to vocational education), and (b) to give added support to vocational education by securing federal aid. The leaders in every state were enlisted for support to the Society. Annual meetings were held, a number of documents were published and proposals were sent to Congress to draft the necessary legislation in keeping with the evolving vocational educational structure.

This organization stimulated the passage of numerous state vocational acts, but the promotors realized they were in the pioneer field in public education. They were able to envision a better future but knew they did not have all the answers. They wanted the new educational program to be a part of the public school system, but also needed the support and understanding of other educators in general education.

The leaders encouraged community support and state aid but did not want state control over local community school boards and programs. They wanted to exercise their freedom to operate and

organize vocational programs independent of state support and supervision. State aid was considered to be incentive aid. This provision for state aid helped many of the larger communities where industry was concentrated.

The impact of the National Society for the Promotion of Vocational Education provided for state support and local control, continuous investigation of needs in vocational education, and teacher training programs. In addition, the Society later joined the American Educators of the Middle West to form the American Vocational Association.

The reviews of the needs from the National Society and other resources also produced the principles of vocational education as follows:

1. Citizenship. Social stability and economic prosperity of the nation depends on character of citizens.

2. General education. Vocational education can only prosper through the best of public education.

3. Clientele. Program should not be limited to a narrowly conceived group but should be open to all students.

4. Theory and practice. Emphasis in vocational education should be placed on both theory and practice.

5. Cooperation. Employers, educators, and students should be involved with the school in planning the educational programs.

6. National problem. Mobility of labor requires federal funding to establish standards, uniformity, and minimum levels of competency wherever workers locate throughout the nation.

7. Individualized instruction. Most instruction must be individual rather than group because of the need for "learning by doing." (Barlow, 1967)

This Society had clearly defined purposes as had the Douglas Commission, and banded together from business, industry, labor, manufacturing, and education. The educators that developed interest in this society were from the field of general education. Many individuals such as Charles A. Prosser were also trained to teach the applications of academic subjects to vocational skills. It was also through this organization, assisted by representatives of labor, employees, and others that the national program of vocational education of less than college grade became a reality through the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917.

Two other effects resulting from the success of the leaders of the National Society was an experiment to develop the Corporate Schools. Some groups of people felt that industry should train their own workers. They soon discovered though that industry felt production was first and they did not provide much training. The other effect was the development of a movement for more federal aid for the vocational programs. This was the Federal Commission on National Aid to Vocational Education (McCarthy, 1953).

The Federal Commission on National Aid to Vocational Education in 1914

The Federal Commission on National Aid to Vocational Education was created in 1914 and consisted of Senator Hoke Smith, Chairman; Senator Carrol S. Page; Representative D. M. Hughes; Representative S. D. Fess; John A. Lapp; Florence Marshall; Agnes Nestor; Charles A. Prosser; and Charles H. Winston. The Commission urged that federal grants be made for vocational education programs. The report was published as one of the House Documents by the Government Printing Office in two sections.

The first section outlined the need for vocational education and the need for national grants to the states. The program that was recommended for vocational education was to conserve energy, prevent waste of human labor, supplement apprenticeship, increase wage-earning powers, increase supply of trained workers, offset increased cost of living and preserve national prosperity.

The second part was a report on hearings. A summary of the findings of the Commission stated that vocational education was needed:

1. to be provided in all of the U.S.;
2. as a wise business investment;
3. urgently in social as well as educational training;
4. to indirectly but positively affect aims and methods of general education and to learn by doing;

5. to connect education with life;

6. to train for all different vocations;

7. extensively and permanently; and that local and state problems were so large that they be worked out by entire nation;

8. to expand the work of different federal agencies in furnishing advice and information but needed funds to do so;

9. to equalize task of preparing workers who moved from state to state with proper funding;

10. to train teachers with national grants required for salaries;

11. but there should be national appropriations for studies, investigations, and reports.

A final recommendation to Congress was made by the Commission. This report included the scope of the grants, the amount of the grants, kinds of schools to be aided, the kind of administration, and the conditions for receipt and use of the grants as stipulated are listed in the following section.

Grants

The national grants were:

1. were to be given to states for the purpose of stimulating vocational education in agriculture and in the trades and industries;

2. provided for training teachers in agriculture, trades, industries, and home economics--and also for paying part of teachers' salaries and others involved with the program; and

3. for appropriations to be made to federal boards for studies and investigations which were to be of use in vocational education.

Schools

The kinds of schools that were to be aided by the grants were only the vocational schools whose programs were under public supervision and control. The education provided was required to be less than college grade and designed to prepare both boys and girls over 14 years of age for employment. The schools were also required to operate all day, evening, and part time.

Administration

The states were required to create boards to deal with the national government and also create a federal board to consist of the Postmaster General, Secretary of Interior, Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary of Commerce, and Secretary of Labor to receive grants. The Commissioner of Education was expected to serve as executive officer.

Conditions

Federal statutes that provided the grants were required to set up procedures for proper expenditure. The states had to accept the conditions, provide proper custody of allotments, formulate plans for administration of the grants with conformity of federal statutes, and establish minimum requirements and qualifications for teachers and equipment. Each dollar that was

to be paid by federal grants and allotted to salaries, required the state or community, or both, to spend an equal amount (matching funds) for the same purpose. Thereafter, each state received an annual allotment if conformity to purpose was established. The payments were to be received quarterly.

Amount of Grants

The amount of grants was broken down into categories for each discipline. After the maximum amount was achieved, it was to be continued annually (McCarthy, 1952).

Summary

The societal changes and factors which influenced vocational education legislation leading to the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 included the:

1. agrarian society;
2. need for general and vocational education;
3. fear of federal control;
4. idea that vocational education would evolve a system of payment to workers for service;
5. ownership of property;
6. need for education for culture;
7. World War I;
8. problem of unemployment;
9. need for more scientific education for agriculture;

10. maturation of the rural society into an industrial society which gave rise to urbanization and family clustering in small geographical areas that led to;

11. competition, efficiency, and maximum utilization at minimum cost which led to;

12. the corporate enterprise system;

13. bureaucratic system of management;

14. belief of the elite that only college preparatory schools were needed;

15. introduction of the 1911 Bill to include Industrial Education and teacher salaries by Senator Page and agriculture group in Congress;

16. Douglas Commission Report which led to Vocational Education and comprehensive schools;

17. National Society which led to the development of the Principles of Vocational Education and to the;

18. Federal Commission on National Aid to Vocational Education in 1914 which led to discoveries, findings, and recommendations for vocational training programs.

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